Mediating Teachers as Learners: Conversations from Shared Experience

Paul Watkins, Ed.D
Southeast Missouri State University

ABSTRACT

Race to the Top mandates, much like other comprehensive reforms before, focuses on teacher quality and student outcomes. Measuring teacher quality, under Race to the Top reforms, remains a subject of uncertainty, particularly measuring for improvement. This article argues that a central purpose of classroom evaluation is to provide supportive, targeted feedback by differentiating teachers as learners. Drago-Severson and Mezirow offer a framework for adult learning that overlays this theoretical analysis. The three cases explored for this article demonstrate levels of adult learning among teachers, directing the novice to addressing the fully formed transformational learner. The cases promote professional learning as both social and reflective.

Key Words: transformative learning, dialogic, instrumental learner, novice learner

Questions of teacher quality and accountability have intensified under the microscope of public outcry (Levine, 2006; NCTQ, 2012; Rhee, 2011). Teacher evaluation remains a cornerstone of quality control; however, evaluation systems have always been uneasy differentiating quality, recognizing exceptional practice, or redirecting ineffective practice. Adopting exotic value-added systems using student achievement scores to measure quality remains an unproven calculus (McCaffery, 2012 ; Raudenbush &Marshall, 2012). In part, the evaluation process is responsible for creating a culture of administrative ambivalence, unwilling to judge poor, mediocre, good, or even excellent teaching (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and President Obama's Race to the Top initiatives have forced rigorous and standardized annual evaluations. Thirty-three states, according to a policy brief from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development ("ASCD"), require annual evaluations for all teachers (Educator Advocates, 2013). While such requirements carry the weight of state policy, the interpretation of "annual" remains open. How often administrators enter classrooms and offer teachers actionable feedback during an academic year remains inconsistent.

The one common denominator able to discriminate levels of teacher quality is an informed and engaged principal. Effective evaluation cannot occur from 30,000 feet. Principals must be in the classroom observing student impact, teacher skill, and classroom community. Pouring over spreadsheets, trend lines, and sending emails avoids the importance of person-to-person exchanges. At the end of the day,

schools are human enterprises. Learning occurs for faculty and administrators in a social context. This article argues that quality teaching is the result of understanding, respecting, and responding adult learners.

WALK-AROUND LEARNING CONVERSATIONS

Evaluative visits to the classroom and meaningful feedback by a school leader impacts teacher growth considerably more than performance questionnaires, scaled measures, or student ratings (Muijs, 2007). A knowledgeable principal, who offers both targeted and scaffold feedback, challenges teachers to consider various dimensions of influence behind instructional decisions (Engin, 2013). A good instructional leader requires a strict personal canon that values and recognizes quality. A curious, patient leader finds the teacher where she is and redirects, pushes, and applauds as required. Such feedback happens most effectively through a personal free exchange of ideas.

Conversation following a shared experience with instruction offers as much importance as the act of simply dropping in. Many schools have embraced a walkthrough process for evaluating teacher performance. The advantages of such a system are that they make the principal or other mentors visible in the classrooms and put them into the learning environment. Further, various evaluations resulting in frequent drop-ins provide reliability in the evaluative results. Harnessing the post walkthrough potential for meaningful collaboration must not become lost in the script. It must not overlook that follow-up from the classroom visit, a brief drop-in, or formal lengthy monitoring, shares as much importance as the visit itself. Effectively communicating the shared experience by both teacher and principal enhances or destroys a trusting climate and professional growth.

TEACHER AS LEARNER

The premise of this article is that schools are learning environments, and faculties, not unlike their students, are also actively engaged in learning. Adult learning provides a frame for examining levels of observation feedback. It is important to differentiate the levels of learning among teachers when communicating feedback effectively with adult learners.

Jack Mezirow (as cited in Kitchenham, 2008), a leading scholar in adult learning practice, defined three kinds of learners worth considering when scaffolding teacher feedback: 1) technical, highly task oriented, 2) practical, merges and interacts with tasks, and 3) emancipatory, infusing knowledge to promote the greater good. As adult learners, teachers need space to grow in practice as well as support for their failure and recovery. With Meziro's model, learning begins with an instrumental stage, exploring how best to learn information; moves to a dialogic stance of how learning could best take place; and finally proceeds to a self-reflective stage, circumspect in practice and context (Kitchenham, 2008). A principal or mentor who is keenly aware of her staff and understands them as learners can promote both professional growth and practice. Further, communicating among teachers as learners creates bonds of trust and collegiality missing from transactional, top-down memoranda.

Much the same as in Mezirow's theory, Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, and Poston (2004) also considered teachers at various levels of competency. The entry-level teacher, who is a novice in the classroom, frequently functions on a competency level that requires direction and a targeted appraisal. For Mezirow, this teacher is at an instrumental level of learning. A second level of competency is the teacher who is more independent (Downey, et al, 2004). This teacher is competent in their work and beginning to emerge as a learner critically self-aware and more reflective about habits of education. On Mezirow's dialogic level, this teacher can make teaching decisions with intermittent direction. Downey et al. explain that, at the third level, the teacher becomes interdependent and merges critical thought with decisive action to effect change in the classroom as well as the organization. At this level, the teacher emerges as an emancipatory (Mezirow, 2000) actor and requires little guidance. In fact, she is a transformational figure in the school as well as the classroom. Learners, however, are not isolated and independent from others.

Drago-Severson (2012) further advanced learning theory by defining teachers as the sum of their experiences. Skills, knowledge, and competency grow through relationships with others. Learning, Drego-Severson (2012) explained, is social. A novice must untangle perspectives and assumptions (Kegan, 2000; Nonaka,1995) about instruction, classroom management, student development, and administrative initiative. Task oriented learners (Mezirow, 2012) are vulnerable to cognitive overload without a nurturing professional community. For these learners, complexity beyond the comfort of structure can become disorienting and onerous. Instrumental learners can untangle procedures, effective practices, and the efficiencies of teaching. Over time, with experience, the instrumental learner produces standards of performance she has authored. As a result, she receives feedback that is imbedded in her values and ideals (Drago-Severson, 2012). The emancipatory learner at the highest level of learning, according Drago-Severson, learns from others to the point she has shaped and embedded them with her values. The emancipatory learner is not only recasting and evaluating her learning, but she is willing to openly evaluate the ideals and values of her peers. She values conflict and challenges others to grow with her professionally (Drago-Severson, 2012).

At these different levels of adult learning, social engagement and collaboration energize professional as well as personal growth (Costa & Garmston, 2002; Mezarow, 2000; Monaka, 1995; Piercey, 2010; Senge, 1990). Perhaps the greatest professional development opportunities occur at the classroom and building levels (Costa & Garmston), where teachers and principals themselves exchange and demonstrate knowledge in practice. Unfortunately, this level of engagement is rarely demonstrated in schools today. As Hansen (2010) pointed out, teachers can be reclusive in practice, preferring to close off their thinking and their practice from others. Like skilled poker players, they hold their cards close in order not to show either a high hand of competence or an inferior hand of ineptitude. As a result, teachers may evolve no higher than task-oriented novices, focused only on external rules and policy.

As principals maneuver in and out of classrooms at varying intervals, they capture real-time practice. A skilled administrator can use informed evaluative feedback as a catalyst for learning and dismantling silos of practice. Sustained learning rarely occurs in a vacuum. It is socially constructed and shared among others through discourse (Costa and Garmston, 2002; Nonaka, 1995). Collaborative discourse,

according to Meziro (2000), requires both a willingness and readiness to find agreement based on consensus, and a high degree of trust (Lencioni, 2002). Collaboration does not exclude tensions among participants. In fact, tension is essential to the learning process and to closing gaps in understanding. Senge (1990) said that if there were no gap, "there would be no need for any action to move [forward]" (p. 139). Diverse views must be encouraged, so no idea remains hidden—a reason trust building among faculty is critical.

TARGETING TEACHER-LEARNER CONVERSATION

Three examples below offer examples of two principals who know their staff as learners. Each principal in these case studies addresses the faculty at his or her level of development.

Novice teachers need more coaching and time spent with them in the classroom, not because they are incompetent or untrustworthy, but because they need help and answers to troubling or complex situations that they confront in the classroom. They do not have the repertoire of strategies that experience and good mentoring will give them. As a result, post evaluation conversations or even casual conversation in social settings with a novice will be more directive (Downey, et al., 2004).

Novice teachers with little experience in the classroom narrowly focus on tasks and highly scripted events, often without contingencies for those times when things go off script. Aware that the novice can at times be taken off stride, the principal must respond with clear and unambiguous direction. A directive conversation helps the novice understand where growth and polish are necessary, but needs to know she is in an environment where mistakes are teachable moments.

The Novice Misdirects Controversy

Larry Richards, Lowell Middle School principal, has just completed an observation in Shepard Stevens's history class. Shepard is several months into his first year of teaching, and Mr. Richards has seen him maturing in the classroom over these early months. However, Shepard needs support and direction from both his colleagues and Mr. Richards as he learns and develops his craft. Mr. Richards finds Shepard after class to share his observation. The conversation post observation gives direction, helping Shepard think critically about his presentation and closer alignment between lesson planning and delivery.

> **Richards:** I have some time before your planning period. I want to talk with you for the next ten minutes about your lesson I just observed.
>
> Your lesson was focused on Fascism and the brutality of Mussolini's rule over Italy. I became a bit confused when you asked students their opinions regarding bullying, but you didn't give them any parameters for the analysis. Nor did you make a connection to the lesson's theme. I thought I knew where you wanted to make a connection in terms of rule by intimidation. But, I wasn't sure, and I don't think the students were sure either.

Stevens: I wanted to connect the act of bullying with the Fascist state in Italy during the late 1930s and early 40s. The kids didn't get any connection at all.

Richards: Your thinking is relevant to our students, and connecting content to what is happening in their lives makes for good pedagogy. Here's where I think the connections fell short. First, it doesn't seem to me that you have prepared your students to disagree by disagreeing agreeably. You're going to have to teach them the skill of discourse. Everyone is welcome to have ideas; we encourage that, and everyone is allowed a counter opinion. They aren't allowed to insult, belittle, threaten, or shout down opposite opinions when they don't agree. Jennifer lit into Ted about his opinions over eighth-graders who wander down the ninth-grade hall. Ted, in response, was really inappropriate almost to the point of being offensive.

Second, the lesson stopped being about Fascism in the 30s and 40s and became about Jennifer and Ted. You never made any connections to you topic. Once Jennifer and Ted became the issue, with that tension in the room, all hope of coming back to the lesson was lost. You have to plan for discussion. Know your learning objective; know how to structure compelling questions that require thought and opinion; and know when and how to pull the discussion back to the objective if you see it wondering away from planned purpose.

Stevens: I gave this lesson a lot of research and felt I was ready with my content. When you say I have to prepare for discussion, I've always believed that if the subject is compelling, discussion will take care of itself. I'm afraid of becoming the Grand Oz controlling what everyone is supposed to think.

Richards: You have an excellent point. Compelling material can ignite meaningful discussion, but compelling material won't shoulder the entire load for you. Remember, I said students should have ideas and feel safe in sharing them. A grand controlling Oz, as you put it, won't let that happen, but a fair, supportive mediator will.

At the grade level meeting last week, Elizabeth made some excellent suggestions for structuring a Socratic discussion in her Literature class. Her structure would fit what I believe you were trying to do. Don't be shy talking with Elizabeth about structuring a meaningful discussion. Friday, let's talk more about what you've learned from Elizabeth and how you can use some of her ideas in your class.

What is obvious in this exchange is that the principal controls the feedback. The conversation is directive. Richards wants to address clearly what he sees as a problem in the lesson he observed and what he sees as future issues, if not quickly corrected. As a result, Richards controls this conversation.

Consider also how Richards begins the direct conversation with a statement and not a question. In doing so, he sets the tone for a collegial relationship and less the boss-to-employee interrogation and blaming. Richards makes his point with Shepard without talking around his concerns. He acknowledges Shepard is making strides in planning for instruction, realizing that content is more relevant to students when they

are able to make connections to their lives. Fascism prior to World War II has relevance to bullying, an all too common behavior in schools. As Mr. Richards points out with his feedback, Shepard must teach, set, and control parameters for discourse in his classroom. He also recognizes that meaningful content can engage and promote learning and challenges his novice teacher about becoming too controlling as a teacher. Mr. Richards understands that learning is situated in relationships (Donaldson, 2008) and concedes the reasoned part of Shepard's argument, but firmly rejects the claim of becoming over-manipulative.

Because Shepard is an emergent learner to the work of teaching, Richards knows he would benefit from a larger social space (Parks 1998) where he can share and test assumptions with faculty. Within that larger space, Shepard can measure his knowledge about teaching against his experiences and feedback from others. Richards explains the value of community and directs Shepard to a colleague who is skilled at mediating student discussion.

Finally, Shepard's development is important to Mr. Richards, and he sets a time to return to talk further. The follow-up establishes a tone of accountability. The visit with a colleague, Elizabeth, should result in targeted action and thoughtful revision.Mr. Richards' post-observation dialogue, while directive, moves Shepard further along a formative path, allowing him more fully to develop professionally.

Principals must also recognize and support teachers who are more grounded and accomplished in their classroom skills, more autonomous in their learning (Mezirow, 1997). These teachers have formed an understanding of expectations. Much the same as Mezirow's (2000) instrumental learner, they are task-oriented and purposeful in making decisions and oriented toward their own goals, which are consistent with their values (Drago-Severson, 2004).

This Isn't Where I Wanted to Go

Elizabeth Charles knows Julie Karins, a fifth-grade teacher, as someone who is introspective and conscious of what her students need in order to be successful. Julie is confident in her classroom, but at times lacks a willingness to assess critically her instructional assumptions and judgment. During a visit to Julie's classroom, Elizabeth notices Julie presents a seemingly off-handed yet compelling opening to her lesson. Unfortunately, students, while engaging in stories of a tornadic destruction, were moving ever further from the planned purpose of Julie's lesson.

> **Elizabeth:** Julie, can we take just a minute to talk about your lesson this morning? I was intrigued with the opening question you asked. I would like to hear your thinking about the students' reaction.

> **Julie:** [Laughs.] Yes, I thought when preparing for this morning I had an intriguing opener that would cause them to think critically. For maybe an instant they did, but it was downhill after that.

Elizabeth: Yes, I thought you gave them something really challenging, too, when you asked them if they were curious about tornado formation after seeing the news from Oklahoma. I thought it also instructive when you read from the text once and reread again, telling the students to use the picture to help understand the layers of atmosphere and how they interact during a storm. You then offered some startling facts about the power of tornadic motion. The visual demonstration with the liquid ingredients in the jar showed them the resulting updraft: the visual to your instruction. When you say, "It went downhill," tell me what you are thinking.

Julie: When they started talking about their fear of storms and personal experiences with tornadoes, I thought, "This isn't where I wanted to go." So I rephrased the question to see if I could get them thinking in more the direction I wanted the lesson to go, the formation of tornadoes. I thought to myself, "I don't want to throw water on their interest, but we can't spend the period afraid of tornados. I confirmed their fears were legitimate, and it may help to understand tornados and why they can be so random when they touch down from the sky." Asking the next question, "How do you think tornadoes form?" seemed to bring them back. Following up with that second question about the conditions that must be present for tornadoes to form fits much better into the objective I had planned. You probably heard in their answers a few myths about tornadoes and what causes them. I was curious what they already knew about weather patterns and where the gaps in their understanding exist. Recent weather events on the news already had them engaged with my learning goal. I needed them to begin generating hypotheses about weather patterns and analyze and evaluate those hypotheses. I believe they began to do that as more of the lesson unfolded.

Elizabeth: I hear what you're saying, then. The news from Oklahoma was more about the result than about the cause. The cause is where you wanted the lesson to go.

Julie: Right, I wanted the kids to consider more what happens in the weather pattern that can create such horrible devastation like they saw on the news. I think they were able to see, even with my poorly structured opening question, how weather can affect their lives and the lives of loved ones. I guess, looking back, I was getting to my objective by connecting to the kids' experiences. Getting them to see the relevancy of the content to their situation always makes their learning a bit more intense for them. However, I didn't want to dwell on the consequences of weather as much as I wanted to target my purpose: What causes those consequences?

Elizabeth: With all that in mind, where will you take this lesson next in your unit?

Julie: Well, I know how kids like to compare weather to their experiences and seem interested in the macabre side of weather. Certainly tornados are tragic and devastating, but I want to the students to know the meteorological dynamics so that they will understand why tornados are so dangerous. I think I'll let them make their own tornado in a jar. I have dollhouse figures, furniture, and small trinkets I can have them throw in a jar to see what effects the tornado's speed, force, and direction have on the environment.

Julie values instructional time: "I didn't want to dwell on the consequences of weather…. I wanted to target my purpose" At the same time, she reflects on how important it is to connect to lived experiences by "getting them to see the relevancy to their saturation." Such relevancy, she recognizes, may compete with time-on-task. Elizabeth listens as Julie reasons through her assumptions about structured priorities of lesson planning and the distractions of students learning in the moment.

As a learner Elizabeth knows Julie as someone who is becoming independent and less tentative in her practice. Elizabeth allows Julie to control the conversation. As a mentor more than a principal, she probes Julie's thinking, not offering suggestions or direction. Elizabeth knows that, as Julie thinks about her learning and forms future decisions around it, she will become more self-reflective and independent (Drago-Severson, 2004, 2012; Mezirow, 2000). Julie will become someone who not only challenges her own thinking, but who is willing to challenge others in their formative learning (Drago-Severson, 2012). Much the same as Mr. Richard's drop-in visit and post-conference, Elizabeth sets in place a small paving stone, establishing a path to Julies' emancipation.

For Mezirow (1997), the emancipated learner is that person who is open to the beliefs, values, and ideas of others; however, she is free to challenge others and revise her thinking. As an emancipated learner receptive to other views, she is also willing to offer her own perspectives and encourages validation or rejection of those ideas. Drago-Severson (2012) defines these learners as self-transforming knowers, steadily growing and emerging (p. 45). Professional conversation, to the emancipated learner, nurtures and energizes growth.

Socrates in the Classroom

Completing a drop-in visit to Katherine Leventhal's economics class, Larry Richards is struck by the level of conversation Katherine manages with her students. He is impressed with how everyone is leaning in and engaged with government finance. Hands are not shooting up, and protests are not voiced with every incendiary comment. Instead, students wait for a pause before interjecting an argument. Student disagreements are reasoned and sprinkled with supportive text for authority—if only faculty meetings went as well, he mused.

While Katherine watches as students leave class for lunch, Larry Richards approaches to discuss his thoughts and to get her perspectives on the lesson he had just observed.

> **Richards:** Katherine, I have a few minutes before going to the cafeteria. I want to hear your thoughts on the lesson that I just observed. I was struck by the level of interest students seemed to have about the 30s Depression Era and how prepared they were for discussing the two strident economic positions for both the Laissez-Faire and Keynesian solutions. Kids argued both sides so emotionally and found the same issues in our current economic debate. I want to know how you created that environment of trust with your students. For instance, you wanted kids to think critically about the market crash in 1929—not a time most students today care about.

Katherine: Well, I've done a lot of reading about motivation and student learning. Brophy and Marzono are two authors who come to mind right now. Those guys have really helped me reconsider a pretty entrenched bias I once held for teacher-as-authority versus teacher-as-moderator. I work hard to develop questions that go beyond that one-best, Wikipedia answer. These are questions that, when you contemplate their answers, will generate more questions. Take today's class. I asked the question, "What is a market crash? Does a market crash happen because of greed? Poor economic planning? Political power grabbing?" I think questions like these require kids to realize that more than one pressure point may shape events in history. I also believe that, yes, the Great Depression by itself isn't at the forefront of conversation with our teenagers, but it becomes more relevant when it begins to explain why mom or dad lost a job, or they have less to spend in the store.

More specifically to your other question, I think trust is built over time, knowing that everyone's perspective has merit. I gave that same advice with Shepard when he observed last week. As I said before, there may be more than one pressure point; thus, a variety of conclusions may speak to the problem.

Larry, I want to know what you feel are motivational strategies you want to see in the classroom. You're in the other classes and see everyone teach. Give me your thoughts.

Larry: You know, that's a good question and an issue I have given a good deal of thought to recently. Our faculty Book-Reads has caused me to consider how our classrooms should look and sound when someone walks in. Student engagement is a complex behavior with a variety of perspective on how it happens. I saw in your class part of the answer, asking higher-order questions. But, I think many other strategies help motivate and engage our kids. More specific to your question, other motivational strategies might include more inferential content questions, engage more divergent opinions through discussion, student response cards, body representations, acting out abstractions such as how a bill becomes a law, and others. A stand and deliver posture may have its place, but it doesn't have to be in every place.

Richards recognizes Katherine as a skilled classroom teacher, not requiring excessive praise for her work. He simply says, "I was struck by the level of interest students seemed to have about the 30s' Depression Era." He opens the dialogue with his immediate impressions. He wants to know how Katherine created a classroom environment where students have contrary views, but respect those of others. He has seen an environment that he hopes to replicate in other classrooms.

Her response reveals a teacher who sees herself as someone who was once entrenched in an ideology of authority. Through reflection and careful study, she transformed her views and became more comfortable in the *teacher-as-moderator* role. But she sees Richards as her colleague, not her boss. She wants from him his unique perspectives as one who has insight into the school's community. She wonders tacitly, with her question to Larry, "Is my practice lining up with expectations? As an organization, are we motivating students to achieve?" She challenges not only Richard's, but also the faculty's, approach to motivating students.

Richards knows Katherine as a teacher immersed in her teaching and her students—one who only requires space to grow professionally.Further, Katherine gives time and thought, not only to lesson content, but to how students engage with the content and its relevance to history as well as to events shaping their lives. Katherine accepts teaching alternatives, in a way, that demonstrate a commitment to self-examination. Unlike Shepard and Julia, Katherine is an adult learner fully developed in her values and purpose. She is emancipated, conscious of her needs as a learner, and willing to openly evaluate her ideas and those of others (Drago-Severson, 2009).

DISCUSSION

The principals in the three vignettes above demonstrate an understanding of their faculty's learning capacity. Through that understanding, they can engage in meaningful conversation of practice. Such a conversation scaffolds feedback and at the same time challenges them to grow professionally and continue to think critically about their instructional decisions.

Transformational learning theory serves as one critical standard for the professional growth of classroom teachers. School leaders must take stock of the adults in the classroom and come to know them as learners as well as colleagues. Immersion in the classroom experience offers the only way principals will understand the cultivation of effective or ineffective instruction. One supported and shared; the other corrected and redirected. The leadership here engages teachers, guiding, probing, and supporting their teaching decisions, pedagogical assumptions, and learning possibilities. Further, these leaders revealed themselves as learners who pushed for their own understanding. Having conversations around practice establishes a priority for learning. Pushing out emails by the principal following a class visit, acknowledging the obvious, is a limp substitute for the growth potential of a conversation. Learning is social.

REFERENCES

Costa, A. L., & Garmston, R. J. (2002). *Cognitive coaching: A foundation for renaissance schools* (2nd ed.). Norwook, MA: Christopher–Gordon Publisher.

Downey, C. J., Steffy, B. E., English, F. W.,Frase, L. E., & Poston, W. K. (2004). *Three-minute classroom walk-through: Changing school supervisory practice one teacher at a time.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Drago-Severson, E. (2004). *Becoming adult learners: Principles and practices for effective development*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Drago-Severson, E. (2009). *Leading adult learning: Supporting adult development in our schools.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Drego-Severson, E. (2012). *Helping educators grow: Strategies and practices for leadership development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Donaldson. G. A. (2008). *How leaders learn: Cultivating capacities for school improvement.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Educator Advocates, ASCD Policy Points. (2013, February). *Evaluating teachers—A snapshot*. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/siteASCD/publications/policypoints/policypoints_feb13.pdf

Erin, M. (Jan. 2013). Trainer talk levels of intervention. *ELT Journal, 67*(1), 11-14. doi: 10.1093

Hansen, H. D. (2010). Initiating Observation. *Principal Leadership, 2*(11), 52-56.

Kegan, R. (2000). What "form" transforms? A constructivist-developmental approach to transformative learning. In Mezirow (Ed.), L*earning as Transformation: Critical perspectives or a theory in progress.* San Francisco: CA: Jossey Bass.

Kitchenham, A. (2008). The evolution of John Mezirow's transformative learning theory. *Journal of Transformative Education, 6*(104), 104-123. doi: 107177/1541344608322678

Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable*. San Francisco, CA: Josse-Bass.

Levine, A. (2006). *Educating school teachers.* Education Schools Project. Retrieved from www.woodrow.org

McCaffery, D. F. (2012, October). *Do value-added methods level the playing field for teachers?* (Issue Brief No. 2). Stanford, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Muijs, D. (2006). Measuring teacher effectiveness: Some methodological reflections. *Educational Research and Evaluation,12*(1), 53-74. doi: 10.1080/13803610500392236

Mezirow, J. (1997). *New directions for adult and continuing education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. & Associates. (2000). *Learning as transformation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

National Council on Teacher Quality. (2012). *State of the states 2012: Teacher effectiveness policies.* Washington, DC: NCTQ.

Nonaka, I., & Takeuchi, H. (1995). *The knowledge-creating company: How Japanese companies create the dynamics of innovation*. New York, NY: Oxford UP.

Parks, M. (1998). Webs of influence in personal relationships. In C. R. Berger & M. Burgoons (Eds.), *Communication & serial influence processes* (155-176). East Lancing, MI: Michigan State UP.

Piercey, D. (Sept. 2010) Why don't teachers collaborate? A leadership conundrum. *Phi Delta Kappan, 1*(92), 54-56.

Raudenbush, S. W., & Marshall, J. (2012, October). *How should educators interpret value-added scores?* (Issue Brief No. 1) Stanford CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Rhee, M. (2011, April 27). *Making evaluations work for students and teachers* [web log post]. Retrieved from www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-rhee/teacher-evaluation_b_853934.htm

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.* New York, NY: Doubleday.

Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., & Keeling, D. (2009). *The widget effect: Our national failure to acknowledge and act on differences in teacher effectiveness*. Brooklyn, NY: New Teacher Project.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Watkins, Ed.D. (pwatkins@semo.edu) has over 28 years in public education as teacher, principal, and curriculum director. He served as a state professional-development consultant for school districts in the Southern Missouri region. He has worked the past fifteen years as coordinator for student teaching and the Missouri University Cooperative Ed.D. programs.